



Howard County Department of Recreation and Parks

TIPS and GUIDELINES for the OFF-LEASH AREA at WORTHINGTON PARK

Howard County Department of Recreation and Parks wants to help ensure that you and your dog have a safe and enjoyable experience at the new Off-Leash Area at Worthington Park. The following tips and guidelines can increase your chances for a positive experience.

RULES

First, we recommend that you become familiar with the Off-Leash Area rules. The rules are summarized on the brochure, posted at the Off-Leash Area and online at www.Hocodog.org. The rules follow common sense, echo Animal Control Laws, and can lead to a safer environment for both humans and dogs. In addition to the rules, we have some suggestions that can enhance your visit.

INTRODUCING YOUR DOG TO THE PARK and TIPS FOR A POSITIVE VISIT

- Try to make your first few visits during the week, when the Off Leash Area is less crowded.
- Gently introduce your dog to the Off-Leash Area by walking the outside perimeter of the fence before entering. Remember, your dog must remain on leash until it is within the safety of the double-gated entry area.
- Unleash your dog in the controlled space provided by the double-gated entry to the Off-Leash Area.
- Look for playmates that are compatible with your dog's play style and learn when those owners visit the Off-Leash Area. Remember that the type and number of dogs present will vary with each visit.
- The Small Dog Area (a smaller enclosed area within the larger area) is reserved for dogs weighing less than 30 lbs., timid dogs and elderly dogs.
- There is no drinking water at the Off Leash Area; we hope to add this amenity in the future. Bring plenty of water for yourself and your dog. We do not encourage sharing drinking water among dogs due to the risk of spreading contagious diseases.
- Be mindful of how exuberant or assertive your dog is with other dogs and people. Not every human or dog wants to be jumped on, licked or knocked over. If you find that your dog is creating a problem for other dogs or being a nuisance to people, you may want to give your dog a "time-out" by temporarily leaving the Off Leash area. **It is your responsibility to control your dog.**
- Your interpretation of your dog's signals and behavior is extremely important to fellow Off-Leash Area users and their dogs. Recognize when it is time to end your visit for the day.
- Please take time to visit the Information Kiosk and familiarize yourself with the Off Leash Area rules, general information, and emergency numbers.

PAWS PATROL

Howard County Recreation and Parks, with assistance from HoCoDOG, has recruited and trained volunteers to monitor the dog park. Paws Patrol volunteers can be identified by an armband and olive green ball cap. Paws Patrol will monitor grounds conditions, educate park-goers of the Off-Leash Area rules, ask for adherence to those rules, and provide general information when requested. Paws Patrol volunteers can also provide access to emergency first aid supplies and emergency phone numbers. They are not, however, required or obligated to provide first aid care to humans or dogs.

While it is impossible to have Paws Patrol volunteers on duty every hour the park is open, the goal is to have a Paws Patrol presence during heavy volume periods.

**We hope that you enjoy the Off Leash Area at Worthington Park,
and that you and your dog become frequent visitors!**